

Migrant Health: One Step At A Time

The Backstretch Clinic at Saratoga Racetrack



GROOMS



LIFE IN THE BACKSTRETCH

IN THE RECREATION ROOM



THE FREE STORE



- B.E.S.T. Backstretch
Medical Clinic Medical Director:
Alexander Cardiel, MD

- Brought to you by: B.E.S.T.
(Backstretch Employment
Service Team)

- Associated with Saratoga
Hospital and Saratoga
Emergency Physicians, P.C.



<http://bestbackstretch.com/>

CLINICA DEL BACKSTRETCH



Our clinic

NEW PHYSICAL PLANT

OVER 600 ENCOUNTERS PER YEAR



Migrant workers are those foreign nationals

- That leave their countries to work abroad
- Migrate to make a better life for themselves and their families
- Many are fleeing devastating socioeconomic stressors that make life untenable in their home countries
- They hope to find steady work at wages far above what they would receive at home
- There are also migrants within the US who work primarily in agriculture and follow the Crops
- They live an invisible and Spartan existence, saving as much money to send to their families in the form of remittances

Our workers follow the racing seasons

Many have had experience in their home country working and caring for horses which is why they are attracted to this work



The majority of migrant workers

Migrant Foreign
Worker from Haiti

Come from.....

- North America (Mexico),
- South America (Argentina, Chile, Columbia, Peru),
- Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama)
- The Caribbean (Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Puerto Rico)
- Asia and Europe



Status as Migrants



- Many come under the H2A visa program as guest workers
- Others are undocumented
- A large proportion are US citizens or legal residents
- Due to their status as migrants many are not eligible for basic preventive services

Largest group of Migrants are Hispanic/Latinos

- Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans ,
South and Central Americans
- **What they share in common** and many times binds them is
Language:
 - but there are differences such as
 - Ahora/ahorita
- Many ***cultural differences*** and ***religious beliefs*** within these groups
that influence health
- **Majority of Mexicans Catholic,**
- **Spiritismo in the Caribbean,**
- **Evangelicals from Central America**

Incumbent on the **Provider of Health Services** to **understand these differences**

- Many factors that affect health:
- **Education** (low literacy rate)
- **Socioeconomic Status** (lack of resources to seek early care early in disease,
- **Infectious diseases** due to overcrowding and poor sanitation, poor nutrition)
- **Religious beliefs** (it is the will of God)

Guatemala



Mexico



Migrants suffer more frequent and and more severe health problems than the general US Population

Due to lack of resources many seek aide from Folk Healers, traditional medicine, rituals:

- **FOLK HEALERS**
- **Curanderos**
- **Sobadores**
- **Yerberos**
- **Parteras**
- **Shaman (Ayahuasca)**

They identify and treat some conditions as ailments which are actually underlying symptoms of other illnesses and which would be taken as signs of more serious health problems if presented to health professionals

RACING SEASON

GROOM



VOLUNTEER



Folk Remedies

- **Otitis externa:** use fresh cow's milk drops.
- **To prevent bleeding** from a large wound: squirt fresh urine in it.
- **Dyspepsia:** cod liver oil
- **Mal de Ojo(Evil Eye):** rub an egg from your head down to the feet and break it in a glass with water.
- **Empacho** (Sour stomach): Ventozas
- **Susto:** an altering fright that has caused health implications; religious ritual
- **Caida de Mollera:** soft spot on newborns head caves in

EXAM ROOM



WHY IS MIGRANT HEALTH IMPORTANT

- **Public Health Issues:** communicable, infectious diseases
- **Identify & Treat Chronic Issues:** making it more cost effective
- **Health Education and Preventive Care**
- **Address nutritional Issues**
- **Depression:** if untreated leads to ETOHism, substance abuse, violence
- **Visibility: Migrants are Largely Invisible,** makes them more vulnerable

SOLUTIONS?

- **Create safe environment** with recreational activities (BEST)
- **Recreational Room** with access to computers/skype
- Provide meals/breakfast to workers
- **Access to ETOH services** for those who qualify for state assistance
- **Psychological counseling** for Mental Health Issues
- **Access to Primary Care** through the Backstretch Clinic
- **Health Fairs, Papathons, Public Health immunization clinic, TB clinic**

ACTIVITIES



Some of our team



**Hay hombres que luchan un día y son buenos,
Hay otros que luchan un año y son mejores,
Hay quienes luchan muchos años y son muy buenos,
Pero hay los que luchan toda la vida:
ESOS SON LOS IMPRESCINDIBLES**

Bertolt Brecht

Questions- During the Panel Discussion